## CLAIMS

**Please amend the claims as follows:**

1.-8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) A method for establishing communication between a master computer system and a particular one of a plurality of slave computer systems all coupled to a common communication channel, said method comprising:

each of the plurality of slave computer systems receiving a session request from a master computer system on the common communication channel;

in response to receipt of the session request, each of the plurality of slave computer systems changing from a receive mode to an answer mode in which all of plurality of slave computer systems are in communication with the master computer system via the common communication channel;

the plurality of slave computer systems thereafter receiving via the common communication channel a second request containing a unique identifier of a particular slave computer system among the plurality of slave computer systems;

in response to the second request, the particular slave computer system maintaining communication with the master computer system in the answer mode and each other slave computer system not identified by the unique identifier in the second request disconnecting from communication with the master computer system and returning to the receive mode.

10. (previously presented) A system supporting communication between a master computer system and a particular one of a plurality of slave computer systems all coupled to a common communication channel, said system comprising:

a common communication channel;

a plurality of slave communication devices all coupled to the common communication channel;

wherein, responsive to a master device transmitting a session request on the common communication channel, each of said plurality of slave communication devices responds to the session request by changing from a receive mode to an answer mode in which all of plurality of slave computer systems are in communication with the master computer system via the common communication channel; and

wherein responsive to thereafter receiving via the common communication channel a second request by the master computer system containing a unique identifier of a particular slave computer system among the plurality of slave computer systems, the particular slave computer system maintains communication with the master computer system in the answer mode and each other slave computer system not identified by the unique identifier in the second request disconnects from communication with the master computer system and returns to the receive mode.

11. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 10, wherein:

each of the plurality of slave computer systems is assigned a respective one of a plurality of unique identifiers that can be used by the master computer system to establish communication with that slave computer system.

12. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 11, wherein:

each of the plurality of slave computer systems has a respective non-volatile memory device that stores the respective unique identifier of that slave computer system.

13. (canceled)

14. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 10, wherein:

after communication is established between the particular slave computer system and the master computer system, the particular slave computer system receives and executes commands from the master computer system.

15. (original) The system according to Claim 10, wherein the common communication channel is a serial communication channel.

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (previously presented) A program product for establishing communication between a master computer system and a particular one of a plurality of slave computer systems all coupled to a common communication channel, said program product comprising:

a computer usable medium;

a control program encoded within the computer usable medium that performs the steps of:

each of the plurality of slave computer systems receiving a session request from a master computer system on the common communication channel;

in response to receipt of the session request, each of the plurality of slave computer systems changing from a receive mode to an answer mode in which all of plurality of slave computer systems are in communication with the master computer system via the common communication channel;

the plurality of slave computer systems thereafter receiving via the common communication channel a second request containing a unique identifier of a particular slave computer system among the plurality of slave computer systems; and

in response to the second request, the particular slave computer system maintaining communication with the master computer system in the answer mode and each other slave computer system not identified by the unique identifier in the second request disconnecting from communication with the master computer system and returning to the receive mode.

19. (canceled)

20. (canceled)

21. (original) The program product according to Claim 18, wherein said control program further performs the step of:

after communication between the particular slave computer system and the master computer system is established, receiving and executing, by the particular slave computer system, commands from the master computer system.

22. (canceled)

23. (canceled)

24. (previously presented) The method of Claim 9, wherein and further comprising:

after communication between the particular slave computer system and the master computer system is established, receiving and executing, by the particular slave computer system, commands from the master computer system.

25. (previously presented) The method of Claim 10, wherein the common communication channel is a serial communication channel, and wherein:

receiving the session request comprises receiving the session request via the serial communication channel; and

receiving the second request comprises receiving the second request via the serial communication channel.

26.-33. (canceled)